DAREDEVIL 103

Though attorney Matt Murdock is *blind*, his other senses function with *superhuman sharpness* -- his *radar sense* guides him over every obstacle. With amazing fighting skills, he stalks the streets all night in relentless pursuit of justice as...

DAREDEVIL, THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR!

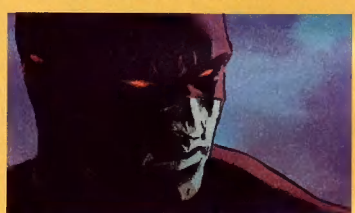
PREVIOUSLY IN DAREDEVIL...
Matt thought his life was finally back on track. He cleared his name, resumed his law practice, and reunited with his wife Milla. But it was all a house of cards.

Mr. Fear, the man responsible for the rash of violent crime tearing through Hell's Kitchen, has been plotting against Matt for a long time. Now he's led Daredevil into his trap, using Milla as the bait. After being poisoned with Mr. Fear's deadly drug, Milla went into a psychotic rage that caused the death of an innocent bystander.

Only the eyewitness testimony of Lily Lucca – the very woman Milla tried to kill in a fit of irrational jealousy – kept Milla out of a mental institution and confined to home custody instead. But Mr. Fear has gone to ground, and his henchmen, the Enforcers, are peddling his toxic drug all over Hell's Kitchen...

WITHOUT FEAR

PART FOUR OF SIX



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HELL'S KITCHEN
YOU *HEARD ME*, YOU CREEPED-OUT DOPE-FIEND *LOWLIFES!*
YOU WANT TO TANGLE WITH *THE WRECKING CREW...*
I should be doing something about this.
DAMN *SURE* YOU'RE GETTING *WRECKED!*
I should be leaping into this fray.

But I can't. Not tonight.
Let Mr. Fear's drug-crazed goons and these super-villains tear each other to pieces.
They deserve each other.
As long as no innocents get in the line of fire... I stay a shadow.
And I wait...for Ox or one of his lieutenants to show.
For someone--anyone--who can lead me to Larry Cranston.

But with each blow that rattles through the pavement...
Each broken window and shattered wall...

I clench my jaw...but I don't make a move.
Much as I want to break their bones and teeth... I don't.

I can't afford to. Not now.

Can't take that risk for anything less than a clear path to Cranston. Not now.

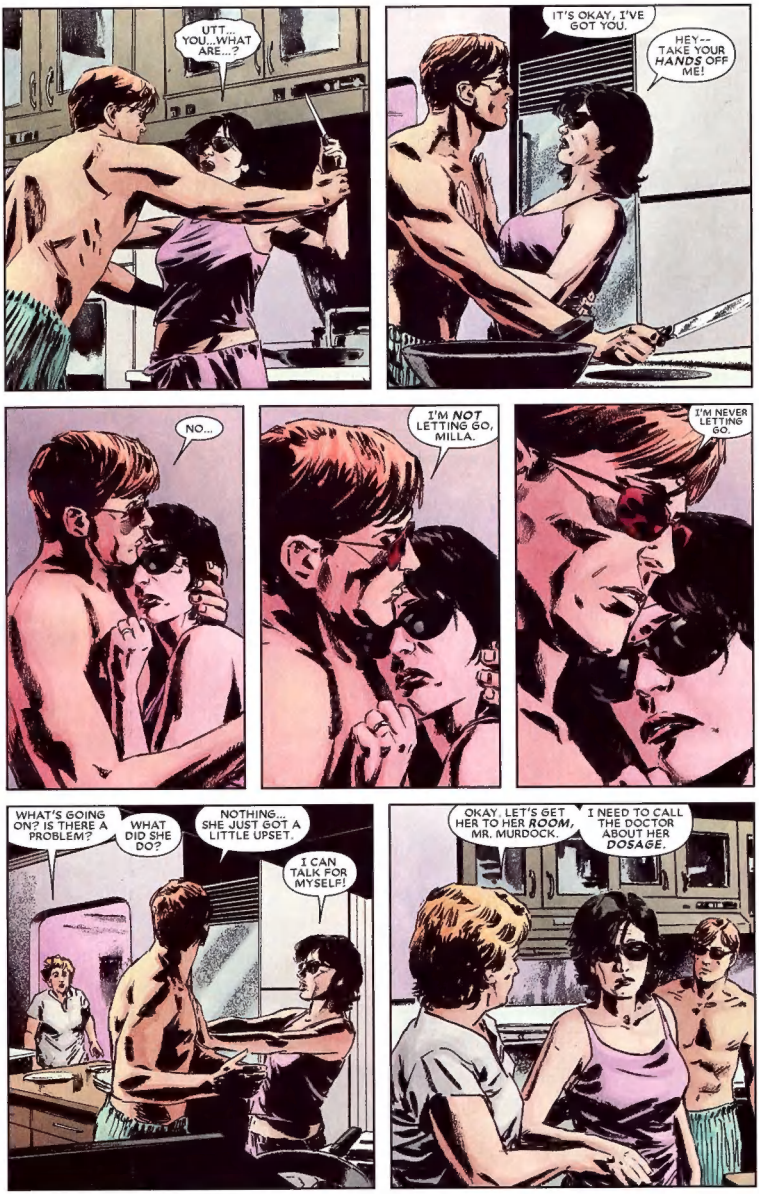
Because Milla may be home for now...but she still needs me.

OFFICES OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
--AND LET'S NOT EVEN GET INTO THE FACT THAT THIS AT LEAST HAS THE APPEARANCE OF IMPROPRIETY, FOGGY.
SOMEONE WHO DIDN'T KNOW YOU VERY WELL MIGHT EVEN ACCUSE YOU OF TAMPERING WITH A WITNESS.
WHAT IS HE TALKING ABOUT?
HE'S JUST BEING A D.A., LILY...DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
I'M SAYING YOU SHOULD HAVE YOUR OWN LAWYER, MS. LUCCA...
...NOW THAT YOU'VE DECIDED TO CHANGE YOUR STORY ABOUT MR. NELSON'S CLIENT.
BUT MR. NELSON WAS ALREADY MY LAWYER. I WAS WITH HIM WHEN THIS WHOLE UNFORTUNATE INCIDENT HAPPENED.
I'M JUST HERE AS A FRIEND, ALGREN.
I ALREADY TOLD LILY IF IT COMES TO IT, SHE'LL HAVE TO GET ANOTHER LAWYER.
BUT SHE STILL WANTED ME HERE.
YES...I DIDN'T KNOW IF I'D NEED COUNSEL, OR IF YOU AND I WERE JUST GOING TO TALK...
WELL, I GUESS FOR NOW WE'LL KEEP IT INFORMAL.
AND I HOPE I'M NOT OUT OF LINE TO SAY HOW LOVELY YOU'RE LOOKING THIS MORNING...
WHY, NOT AT ALL, MR. ALGREN.
THAT'S QUITE FLATTERING OF YOU.

NOW MY DETECTIVES TELL ME YOU'RE NO LONGER SURE EXACTLY *WHAT* HAPPENED ON THAT SUBWAY PLATFORM.
IS THAT RIGHT?
YES. I WAS SORT OF, WELL, *IN SHOCK*, WHEN THE POLICE FIRST TALKED TO ME.
I MEAN, SEEING THAT MAN KNOCKED IN FRONT OF THE TRAIN LIKE THAT.
OF COURSE. THAT MUST'VE BEEN *TERRIBLE* FOR YOU.
BUT I THINK I MAY HAVE MADE A *MISTAKE*.
I THINK MILLA *SLIPPED* AND WAS REACHING OUT...AND I JUST *THOUGHT* SHE WAS PUSHING ME.
UH-HUNH... WELL. NOT THAT I DON'T BELIEVE YOU...
BUT I HAVE *SEVERAL* WITNESS STATEMENTS THAT CONFLICT WITH THAT.
BUT I WAS THE ONE *CLOSEST* TO HER. DOESN'T THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE?
IT MIGHT...LET ME...
...LET ME *THINK* ABOUT IT.

MY GOD...SEEING IT IN ACTION, THAT... THAT'S WHAT YOU DO?
NOT ON PURPOSE, FOGGY.
BUT IF I CAN INFLUENCE MEN, WHY NOT USE THAT TO HELP?
BECAUSE WE'RE LYING, THAT'S WHY.
AND YOU'RE MAKING HIM OVERLOOK IT.
ARE YOU MAD AT ME?
I DON'T KNOW.
I CAN'T SEEM TO GET MAD AT YOU FOR MORE THAN A SECOND OR TWO.
I'M SORRY. I JUST FEEL RESPONSIBLE, FOGGY. IF I HADN'T BEEN THERE...
NO. NONE OF THIS IS YOUR FAULT.
WELL...STILL, I'D LIKE TO SEE MATT AND MILLA, IF I CAN.
JUST TO SEE HOW SHE'S DOING.
NO... NO.
THAT'S NOT A GOOD IDEA, LILY.
THAT'S REALLY NOT A GOOD IDEA...

She's getting worse.
The sedatives take away the edge in her voice...and give her moments of clarity.
SILLY MAN... I CAN COOK SCRAMBLED EGGS.
I'M NOT AN INVALID.
But that's just what they are...moments.
And they're fleeting.
DAILY BUGLE
ILLEGAL AVENGERS
MILLA...?
MILLA, PUT THAT DOWN... PLEASE PUT THAT DOWN.


UTT... YOU...WHAT ARE...?
IT'S OKAY, I'VE GOT YOU.
HEY-- TAKE YOUR HANDS OFF ME!
NO...
I'M NOT LETTING GO, MILLA.
I'M NEVER LETTING GO.
WHAT'S GOING ON? IS THERE A PROBLEM?
WHAT DID SHE DO?
NOTHING... SHE JUST GOT A LITTLE UPSET.
I CAN TALK FOR MYSELF!
OKAY. LET'S GET HER TO HER ROOM, MR. MURDOCK.
I NEED TO CALL THE DOCTOR ABOUT HER DOSAGE.

The live-in nurse isn't helping matters, either.
THERE THERE, DEAR...ELSA'S GOT YOU.
DON'T PATRONIZE ME!

I almost feel like she's monitoring my comings and goings as well as Milla's progress...
...or rather her lack of progress.

I thought having her home would help. That I could make her better.
Keep her safe, help her meditate...focus.

But each day, the calm place in her mind moves further out of reach.
Nothing I know is stopping Cranston's poison. I may not even be slowing it.

All I know for sure is, I'm running out of time.
I NEED TO GO OUT FOR A WHILE, ELSA... TO DO SOME WORK.
THAT'S FINE, MR. MURDOCK. I'VE GOT THINGS UNDER CONTROL HERE.

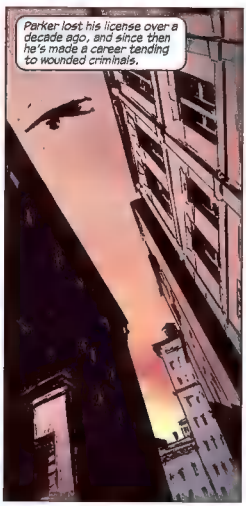
She's slipping away...
She's getting worse.

BE GOOD IF YOU COULD FINISH THAT TODAY...
I KNOW YOU'RE TRYIN'... I KNOW.
I JUST, Y'KNOW...I WANNA GET THE HELL OUTTA DODGE... BASICALLY.
YOU FIND TURK?
COULD USE THE MONEY HE OWES US.
NAH, HE'S GONE, MERV.
TURK WISED UP, LOOKS LIKE.
HARD AS THAT IS TO BELIEVE.
I MEAN, WISDOM AND TURK DON'T EXACTLY GO IN THE SAME SENTENCE A LOT, Y'KNOW.
MORE LIKE... ONE OF THESE THINGS IS NOT LIKE THE OTHER... IF YOU GET ME.
BUT EVEN TURK HAD TO SEE THIS TRAIN WRECK BARRELIN' DOWN THE TRACKS AT US.
I GUESS.
HAND ME THAT SOCKET WRENCH.
SO...YOU THINK WE'RE GETTIN' ON THE ROAD TODAY?
WE'LL SEE, CHICO...ONCE I TURN THIS BABY OVER.
RUNNING OUT ON ME ALREADY?
AW, HELL.
I THOUGHT WE HAD A DEAL.

People like me, when ■ get hurt doing what it is we do... there's a place ■ can go to get taken care of. A secret place.
A place that only people like me even know where to find.

The Night Nurse's clinic--or rather clinics, plural, because there are several and they're always moving around town.
Since they're illegal and all.

But we wouldn't survive without the Night Nurse...
...just like the people we fight couldn't survive without Doc Parker.


Parker lost his license over a decade ago, and since then he's made a career tending to wounded criminals.

And just like the Night Nurse, he moves his operation every week or two.
HELLO, DAN... NOT SEEMING SO FANCY RIGHT NOW.
GA-- AHH!

NO.
WHUD
AAHHHH!
...DAMN...MY STITCHES...
AND I'M JUST GETTING STARTED.
HEY--WHAT THE HELL IS GOING--
OH MY GOD..
STOP RIGHT THERE, DOC, AND I WON'T HAVE TO--
GET HIM, DOC! GET HIM!
BLAM

So I let the police take this one instead...in full riot gear.
POLICE! FREEZE!
EVERYBODY ON THE GROUND-- NOW!
GET 'EM!
KILL THESE FRIGGIN' PIGS!
BLAM BLAM BLAM
POLICE
POLICE
It's chaos almost immediately.
BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA
Noise and gunpowder and cordite fill the air.

...WHU... HUNH...
...WHAT HIT ME...?
THAT WOULD BE ME...
...OR THE CAB I WAS *DRIVING*, AT LEAST.

PORTFOLIO REVIEW

They were heroes in another time, of a Golden Age. They protected the Greatest Generation, and helped save the world from Hitler's tyranny. They were strangers before the dawn of the Marvels. Then they were gone. Who are the Twelve? Where have they been? Why are they back? And who wants them dead? Award-winning writer J. Michael Straczynski has reached back to the early days of comics and found a mystery long buried surrounding these characters, awakening this – and these twelve characters – for today's generation.

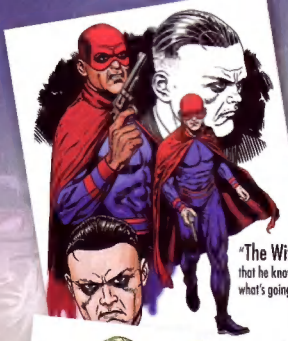
To find out more about The Twelve, we sat down with Executive Editor Tom Brevoort for a brief introduction to them and also show artist Chris Weston's stunning character designs.

"**Captain Wonder** had a wife and a family back in the 1940's, and is the most cut-off and adrift of the Twelve, the ideals he fought for and believed in seeming quaint to modern, cynical eyes."

"**Dynamic Man** is the most overtly heroic of The Twelve, but also the most uptight and repressed of them."

"**Mister E** is what the heroes of the age would call a "tourist," a guy without any superhuman powers who nevertheless entered the community of mystery men armed only with a mask and a gun."

"**Master Mind Excello** possesses heightened senses and some precognitive abilities. Unfortunately, in the world of the 21st century, this means he's being bombarded constantly by wireless internet traffic, digital television signals, and all manner of other high-frequency chatter."

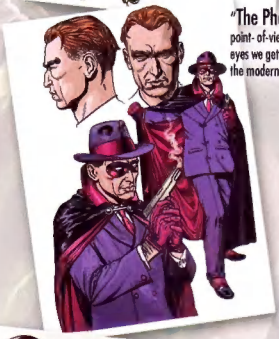


"The Witness's power—and his curse—is that he knows what you've done, and he knows what's going to happen to you as a result."

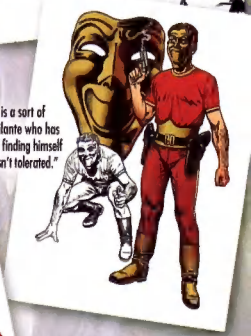
"The Fiery Mask wears a , well, fiery mask. You'd think that'd hurt…"

"The Black Widow is the servant of Satan himself, dispatched to the mortal plane to deliver the souls of evildoers into his custody."

"The Blue Blade is all about the theater of being a Mystery Man. He's got an agent, and is working on television deals—now that he knows what television is."



"The Phantom Reporter is our main point- of-view character, the guy through whose eyes we get to see the other characters and the modern world as well."



"The Laughing Mask is a sort of Punisher-style gun-slinging vigilante who has to deal with the consequences of finding himself in an era where hooded justice isn't tolerated."

"Electro, the Marvel of the Age, is the least personable of The Twelve, being a robat guided from afar by his creator."

"Rockman claims to be the lost Prince of an underground kingdom, but nobody's quite certain if this is true, or just a delusion on his part."

THE TWELVE

BEGINS JANUARY 2008

LOOK WHO'S TALKING!

AWARD-WINNING COMIC BOOK WRITER BRIAN MICHAEL BENDIS

MARVEL: *You got "Freaky Friday" (Spidey & Wolverine switched bodies) and now "Amazing Friends" (Spidey teams up with Iceman and Firestar) green-lit. Are there any stories in Ultimate Spider-Man that you've pitched that have been rejected?*

BRIAN BENDIS: I'm trying to think. I have a pretty good sense of what won't get the green light so I try not to climb a hill I know can't be climbed. I do have a rather controversial story coming some time next year that got a tentative green light, but it was a hard sell. We'll see if it makes the light of day.

MARVEL: *We're coming out of a very dark time in the lives of Pete and his supporting cast. Will this be a lighthearted story or is there more to this than the surface seems to suggest?*

BRIAN BENDIS: Yeah, we tend to bounce back and forth with stuff like this. It is much lighter than the death of the Goblin, but it's still an important story for the series.

MARVEL: *You seem to have a childlike glee regarding this story. How long has this been in the works?*

BRIAN BENDIS: It was in my first ever "list of things to do" when I got the book back in 1999. Followed by a note to myself saying: "How the @#$% can you pull that off?" It took 118 issues to get the pieces in order.

MARVEL: *We've met Iceman before, but not Firestar. Is she someone new or someone we've already met?*

BRIAN BENDIS: She is someone we have met… BUT NOW SHE IS ON FIRE!

MARVEL: *Were you a fan of the Spider-Man and his Amazing Friends cartoon from the 1980's?*

BRIAN BENDIS: Oh yeah. There were some episodes, if memory serves, that were far superior in quality of animation than others. I was a really big fan of those.

MARVEL: *Will Ms. Lion be making her long-overdue appearance in the Ultimate Universe?*

BRIAN BENDIS: Sadly, that would be a no.

MARVEL: *Is this going to be an ongoing team-up or a one-time thing?*

BRIAN BENDIS: Probably a one-time thing as Jeph Loeb is going to blow up the Ultimate Universe in a few months.

MARVEL: *Will they fight Videoman? (Editor's Note – In the animated series, Videoman was a villain created from an arcade game…seriously.)*

BRIAN BENDIS: I thought about it, but decided that Magneto is the better choice in relation to me keeping my job.

MARVEL: *Have you ever moved someone's football statue just to see if the room would change into a super-duper high-tech hangout?*

BRIAN BENDIS: Other than Joe Quesada's? No.

MARVEL: *You're working on one of the longest runs on a single-character title in history, and yet you've managed to bring things forward that you planted the seeds for years ago. Are there other subplots boiling just under the surface that fans should keep their eyes on?*

BRIAN BENDIS: Well, right after "Amazing Friends," we have a couple of one-shot stories that pay off some characters in a pretty big way. Then after that we are adapting and expanding on the Ultimate Spider-Man story from the video game we did, so now it will fit in continuity perfectly.

MARVEL: *How far out DO you have this book plotted?*

BRIAN BENDIS: I'm honestly well into the 140's. I'm scripting issue 126 now.

'Nuff Said!

QUESTIONS THAT NEED ANSWERS!

WHAT DID YOUR PARENTS THINK ABOUT YOU READING COMIC BOOKS WHEN YOU WERE A KID?

"They were always happy to see me reading. I think they figured that my interest would flag eventually and I'd leave comics behind. That didn't happen. When I was a teenager, my father gave me advice that I'll always remember: He said, "Your hobbies are fine, but you can't make a living out of science fiction and comic books."

- PETER DAVID – Writer
(X-Factor, She-Hulk)

"My mother introduced me to comics, and would buy them for me by the box. Of course, back then they sold them in the local grocery store. She still thinks my collection is going to make me rich one day."

- CHRIS YOST – Writer
(New X-Men, X-Force)

"They were very supportive about anything that had me reading, but were concerned that words like "mayhem," "archenemy," and "clobbering time" were frequently working their way into my vocabulary."

- DAN SLOTT – Writer
(Avengers: The Initiative, Amazing Spider-Man)

"I think it was keenly encouraged as long as I didn't spend my life at it. My then Head Teacher told my parents at Careers and Vocations day that I would doodle my way into the unemployment line and I think they agreed."

- BRYAN HITCH – Artist
(Ultimates, Fantastic Four)

"My mom knew I'd never grow up to be a rocket scientist, or any kind of scientist for that matter, so she always encouraged me to invest in my creative interest. Cartoons were my first love and comics became my close second. She and my grandparents helped me amass quite a collection, sadly, one I would sell many years later for very little money... God, I miss those books."

-CRAIG KYLE – Writer
(New X-Men, X-Force)

"They didn't mind as long as it didn't interfere with anything else... like school work."

- JOHN ROMITA Jr. – Artist
(World War Hulk, Amazing Spider-Man)

"They completely supported my addiction! I was a voracious reader to begin with, and burying my nose in comics just gave me more to read and kept me out of their hair longer. Made it easy to shop for my birthday and Christmas too, as comics and Star Wars toys were all I ever wanted."

- C.B. CEBULSKI – Writer
(Loners, Fairy Tales, Wolverine)

"They thought it was a bad influence on me, not understanding that it was comics that taught me how to read, and gave me a sense of morality and ethics that I carry to this day. They thought comics were a distraction from my school work. I, on the other hand, treasured my comics. I kept them in a tin box to protect them from the environment, stacked front-to-back-to-back the way you're supposed to, to keep them from bending up. I had complete runs from issue one of everything from X-Men to Journey into Mystery and Thor and Amazing Spider-Man and Daredevil and Conan and Eerie and Creepy and on and on and on, all in pristine condition, not because I thought they'd be worth something someday, but because I liked keeping them that way. So one day, when my grades weren't sufficiently high, my father sat down across from me, opened the tin box, and one by one, tore up every single one of my comics as I looked on. 'This is for your own good,' he said. 'You'll never make a living from comics, you know.'

- J. MICHAEL STRACZYNSKI – Writer
(Thor, The Twelve, Amazing Spider-Man)

"I don't think that my dad really cared, because my older half-brother (Hi David!) was hugely into reading comics. My mom, on the other hand, was a completely different story... she hated it. She thought I was wasting my time until I said something about buying all my manwha (Korean comics) so that I could learn to read Korean faster, and learn more Korean words that way. It was like I had to throw some educational spin on it all. I hid all the American and Japanese stuff for a while, till she finally got over it a few years later and gave up, then I covered my room in the stuff."

- CHRISTINA STRAIN – Colorist
(World War Hulk, Runaways)

NOW YOU KNOW!